

# FAITH AND FREEDOM



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# Christianity and Present Society

WALLACE W. ROBINS, B.S., B.D., D.S.T.

**A**LTHOUGH a simplification, it is fair to say Western civilization has been a dynamic attempt to justify, or bring into creative balance, three major aspects of her tradition: Roman political order, Greek democracy, and Hebraic-Christianity. The stresses and strains amongst these three elements have, at times, come into temporary adjustments and given men the illusion of cultural integrity, but each time the pattern of stability was achieved only by the subservience or outright denial of one or two of the elements, so that order, or absolute freedom, or Utopian Christian charity was left the master of the field.

Since Christian charity in social organizations, other than in small, family-like communities, has never been actually in the ascendancy, it is sometimes said that Christianity has never been tried, and romanticists dream of persuasive martyrdom as a means to prod the Christian conscience into the Beloved Community. These conscientious men hope that the order of the state with her economic life and political laws will be moved by the testimony of saints. Unfortunately, this brave and gentle coercion toward harmony has been tried over and over again, and it has succeeded only when the population to whom it was directed possessed a faith in the validity of conscience. What effect could such a method have upon a Hitler, as reported by Hermann Rauschnig in *The Voice of Destruction*, "Conscience is a Jewish invention. It is a blemish, like circumcision." The answer is a matter of history and, in the gas chambers and crematoria, it confronts even the squeamish, who for so many years refused to see.

The absolute failure of Christian conscience to persuade absolute state power has thrown all of Christian teachings into a dark and forgotten corner in practical world affairs. It may be summoned out to bless the organized state, or it may be ceremoniously mentioned in an official statement; it may be kindly or cruelly used, as by sons who are impatient to secure the signature of a senile father who has not technically died and left his full inheritance. In no case is any vitality assignable to it. Ostensibly the field is voided and awaits the struggle of forces which refuse the captaincy of ancient Hebraic-Christianity.

But is this wholly accurate? Are not the churches still in the field? Can practical men ignore the Reformed churches, the Eastern church, the Roman? Certainly they cannot ignore the Roman, but they would be stupid indeed to see in Eastern orthodoxy any change of role from that

of a servant—usually a grovelling one at that—to whatever state power contains her. Of Protestantism the charge of servitude can be only slightly less severe.

The social effect of Lutheranism has been to bless the prince and never criticize him, unless he threatened the church directly. Isolated from politics by her own wish, the church had not sufficient moral power to raise more than scattered individual protests until she was wholly enslaved. And, if she is liberated to-day once more, it is only to her old pietistic way of dealing with individuals and their relation to a God who seems not to care what sins an organized society commits.

The Calvinist branch of Protestantism, either direct followers of Calvin or indirectly related, has notoriously defended, and is, by some believed to be, the very midwife of bourgeois social organization and morals. In any case, the great Calvinist struggle against ecclesiastical authority and for the readmission of the individual to western society has gone beyond all bounds. It has helped produce an individualism capable of the most fantastic intellectual devices to prove that the social whole has no responsibility for any of its parts. Finally it has held that the individual has no responsibility except to himself. This being equivalent to pleasing God!

Outside of the moral and Christian condemnation which can be levelled at such individualism, the immediate point is that events have passed beyond the need for it. The social-service state has already passed the climax of its struggle with individualism, and the Protestant view of society is now obsolete as well as wrong.

Roman Catholicism, in contrast, having maintained a pre-capitalistic view of the individual and a vital political interest in social affairs, is a contender for the future not to be dismissed lightly, if at all. Thomas Aquinas gives her a rational order for the intellect, and her doctrine of the mystical body centres political and economic order in the most sacred of the church's actions, the mass itself.

Yet, if the equipment of Roman Catholicism is admirably suited to deal with the new era, the question yet remains how much of Christianity it contains. It does not contain Christianity but a basic and inescapable denial of it. This basic denial rests upon the one assumption that the church is, if not God himself, then his only manifestation to the human race; in effect the same thing. When the God-identification reached its logical conclusion in 1870 with the doctrine of Papal infallibility, it cut the Roman church off from any possible salvation, and it left her no more than an ecclesiastical organization many times more Roman than Christian; it set her as an implacable foe to freedom.

If she protests this judgment, it is for her to explain her pacts with Mussolini and Hitler, her partizan approval of every authoritarian movement which would admit her churches to operation, and her blessed



Spaniard, Francisco Franco. If the church and God are one, it may be reasonable to do anything, however against the tradition of Christianity or the Spirit of Christ, to save the church. That is logical, but it is not Christian. Not at least as exemplified by Jesus, whether God or man or both, as he died upon Calvary.

Undeniably powerful as a contender for world dominion, the Roman Church cannot be realistically conceived of as Christian. Still she stands.

Harassed, distraught, and afraid, modern man is led to believe that he is faced with a choice, unsatisfactory and unpleasant perhaps, but a single choice between Roman Catholicism and Russian Communism. But is the choice a real one?

A comparison of the two systems shows that there is no difference between Roman Catholicism and Russian Communism that is other than esoteric. The mysticism of the one differs in content from the mysticism of the other, but they are identical in form. Both, whatever their beginnings, are now counter-reformations, and show all of the military virtues unmitigated by anything like charity or freedom.

Russia has a long view of history moving inexorably to an apocalyptic conclusion in which the dynamic struggle of evil (the capitalist) with the good (the working class) will finally come to a flaccid outcome in which good will reign supreme. Russia has a tradition that smells of faggots and sounds with the cries of punished heretics; it has an infallible Kremlin, a priesthood of the party members, Marx as a Christ, Lenin as a St. Peter, and Stalin as a Pope. Between the Grand Inquisitor of Dostoevsky and the Soviet there is no political or psychological difference. It demands the same devotion of men in exchange for bread and miracles.

However genuine may be the drive for freedom and charity in the heart of the Roman or Soviet missionary amongst the unbelievers, the missionary's private faith turns out to be but a useful tool or stratagem: the Vatican and the Kremlin stand unmoved except to agree that the saints foretell the future in which the mass of men will one day share when God or the Dialectical Process shall bring it about; meanwhile there is Ignatius Loyola—a realistic exemplary to them both.

Those who search for compromise between contending forces should not look here; for Roman Catholicism and Russian Communism are but the image and reflection of the same system. While the pure essence of their respective theologies may significantly differ, their real manifestations as religious or pseudo-religious organizations are based clearly upon an authority which cannot be criticized by its followers; the disciple is expected to give it his unquestioning and blind faith. Neither system possesses that faculty of self-evaluation which a Christian faith in the inexhaustible and infinite God impels. Here is the monolithic system. It is heteronomous; built on one temporal revelation as the final truth; it stands against the Creative Lord of History as a prideful equal, doomed

by its own arrogance to be worn away, perhaps even more quickly demolished, like an angel who shows his commission as though it were a deed to the throne of grace.

The live option for modern man is between the authoritarian state and its planned economy, on the one hand, and the democratic state and its rudiments of a planned economy, on the other. The possibility of being forced to a choice between the two was first a matter of discussion in learned journals, but now it is a matter of common debate—at least it is in those countries where such matters may still be discussed without jeopardy. The popular hope is for a mechanical adjustment between the two.

Those who believe that an adjustment between the two may be made have much logic on their side. It would appear reasonable to suppose that when the best of two worlds are not in absolute conflict they might be joined together. The democratic state with a planned economy, these people believe, would be the middle way which should attract both. The difficulty lies in the fact that while at least two large democracies, the United States and the United Kingdom, have moved toward a planned economy, often following examples set by smaller democracies, there has been no semblance of change toward democracy in the Communist dictatorship; it remains implacably set against freedom.

But, can it not be argued that Russian Communism may yet match the democratic powers and move quite as unexpectedly toward political freedom? It cannot be so argued if one looks at the simple theological fact that Russia has lost the Augustinian concept of pride as sin. Russian Communism has deified her system, as the Roman Church has deified hers. Thus she sees her past as a perfect manifestation; she will brook no criticism of it; it bespeaks her future. There can be no deviation from her line without admission of fault, and no deviation will come under diplomatic pressure, threat of war, or war itself. The only hope is for a recovery of Christianity amongst her population and that looks like a long, long wait. The best expectation is that her increasing necessity for intercourse with free political countries, if those countries bring the components of their own culture into satisfactory organization, may give Russia a healing touch with the reality she now avoids.

Yet, while the assertion must be made that the best future for man is with the democratic powers, it is nonetheless clear that there are serious qualifications to be added to such an assertion.

Let us examine briefly the situation of the democratic state.

In respect to political law the democratic state has been profoundly influenced and directed by the essence of Christian doctrine. The Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, or equality of all souls in the sight of God, was the pry which worked on the walls of class and privilege. Political power was forced to admit the equality of all men



before the law, and this law, unable to explain itself by power alone, could find its rest only in the order of the Creator as apprehended by the reason of man. This coupled with the doctrine of man's fallibility allowed the Western democracies to assimilate Greek democracy and keep it from going into demagogic forms or permitting dictatorship. Thus, on the purely political level, the Western democracies have solved the problem of balance between the three major factors of western culture.

In the economic life of Western democracy the scene is not so idyllic, for the economic life of the West was held to be under the direction of selfish interests inimical to Christianity. No moral pronouncements were to be made respecting economic life and the state was expected to stand clear and let the self-interest of man work itself out. The economic force was believed to be incapable of being domesticated, much less Christianized and, wild, untamed and pagan, it nearly brought the state, as indeed it has brought the church, into a chafing subjugation.

Unfortunately, the rebellion against the tyrannical superstition of the bourgeois mind has come only at second-hand from Christian principles. The state was forced to assert her authority over the economic system which developed resonant booms and busts in order to maintain order and to protect the lives of her citizenry. The reason for state interference was found not in Christian doctrine but in secular philosophy. The movement for reform in the late capitalistic era is moralistic and autonomous. The plea for justice to all men is made on humanistic principles alone, not theological ones. The noble document of political freedom which was the summation of European dynamics, the American Declaration of Independence, held "these truths to be self evident,—that all men are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights: that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This document is an embarrassment in its credit to the Creator.

Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness are, for modern man, principles deduced from man himself, and natural law is a needless, if not a superstitious concept.

The danger of such a beginning for a planned economic order will be apparent to religious men. Simply, there is no corrective within it such as Christian humility provided for the political order. Every Christian should welcome the drive for justice as long overdue, but every Christian should be concerned to make the drive successful by introducing into it the necessities of judgments beyond human desires or else the greed of the new will be as unrestrained as the avarice of the old. Bureaucracy is not an improvement upon plutocracy.

Since ecclesiastical Protestantism has already refused to act in the role of prophet in matters political and economic, we can hardly expect more than what we have:—a few clerics bravely, but quite individually,

putting their hands on the bell-rope of prophecy and sounding those few peals of warning which are quickly pronounced unorthodox by their bourgeois constituents and ignored by the masses.

What hope there is lies within the unaccounted-for free churchmen and liberal religionists whose views and loyalties within Christianity have been rejected by both Roman Catholic and Protestant churches. This group has an historical direction, which, if fulfilled, would carry the broken parts of Western culture into wholeness. For four centuries the religious liberals have held a proud banner aloft: Freedom, Reason and Tolerance. These concepts were religious concepts and secularised as they have become for men, who from the Enlightenment on, began to conceive of them in a purely humanistic way, so that to-day one must make clear that when one speaks of freedom, reason and tolerance, one speaks theologically and religiously, and not politically or merely philosophically. A further difficulty which appears in understanding this liberal tradition is also semantical: especially as to the terms "reason" and "tolerance." The Freudian limitations placed upon the Eighteenth Century function of human reason and the pragmatic attack upon logic has led many to discard reason as a basic concept. But of course the religious liberal was not proposing reason as a substitute for God but was seeking a method of intelligent research which brought religion out of the mists of the super-world into the realities of this one. The insistence was that the ecstatic tongue be intelligible, that religion speak to man's condition directly; that the word take on flesh. The historical function of reason has not changed in our time: its purpose in religion is to keep the religious world and the world of reality one world so that the religious world will be real and the real world religious. For the liberal, religion cannot be subjective or ideal, it perforce is founded in mysticism, but it must have moral consequences, individually and publicly.

The term "tolerance" does not mean for the religious liberal an admonition to patience in the face of evil or a lack of perception between right and wrong. Neither is tolerance to be construed as the mere absence of intolerance in the treatment of minority groups. For the liberal tolerance has been a positive and creative aspect of religion which makes the liberal deliberately seek out men of all classes, nations, and even religious traditions, to help us all to recognise our own brotherhood under God, to share with each other the best knowledge men have had of the divine.

This dynamic tolerance has given the religious liberal a catholicity and a universalism which no other movement has known. Although the Christian liberal is firmly established in Christianity, his is a bridge church to all other religious traditions. For the liberal the seamless



robe of Christ will not be knitted up until all men have discovered or rediscovered their common humanity and returned to the peaceful family of God.

But the great concept is freedom: great because it is God's freedom in measure granted to the creature man. No man so constituted can be dragooned into the attitude of charity, nor coerced into the family of mankind. The liberal seeks his brother's inner decision, not his servile and fearful act of conformity. Indeed the liberal strikes against any tyranny over the bodies and souls of men with an unrestrained arm, for he is in the certain knowledge that he who would rob men of the gift of God fights God himself.

Freedom, Reason and Tolerance, understood theologically and practiced religiously, would relight political democracy and adjust economy so that the society of man would confirm liberty in law and justice in economy. It would give the now lost masses of mankind a new inner and true significance as human souls. It would act through creative tolerance as the leaven of unity in the world.

And now there is one dreadful question left to ask. Do present-day liberals carry forward their tradition to the victory which all of history has sought, or have they halted in their march?

Only if one knew all of the inner urgencies of those who call themselves liberals in religion to-day could the answer be given truly. There are evil portents, however, that all is not well. Some have made a new literalism out of the historical Jesus which binds Christian Ethics to an epoch and a place. Others have reacted to the literalism by mythologizing Jesus into an idealistic Christ unattached to practical affairs, incapable of judgment over politics, economics, or individual souls. Still others have identified Christianity with humanism or allowed the scientism of contemporary man to seep through and drown the humility which men can know only before God, or they have begun to melt their gold to make, out of envy, an image of the monumental ecclesiastical religions which surround them and hurt their pride.

Finally there are some who have failed generally to develop a theological mind capable of dealing with the wealth of tradition and the crying needs of humanity to-day. These either become parasitical upon alien theological schemes or deny that the liberal can have a theology. In either case liberalism is weakened for her task, on the one hand by the fifth column of orthodoxy, and on the other hand by the fifth column of secularism.

These are all most grievous faults, and should they prove to be prevalent now or in the future, the time of man's redemption will be delayed most cruelly, for he has no other help, and no other way.

It may well be that we shall not avert further tragedy. The demonic forces of church and state, the unsanctified and primordial urges of hungry and angry men for justice, the human greed and pride of un-Christian man, could once again engulf the world in sorrow, pain and death. But on the other side of tragedy the world shall not be different from what it is to-day, and should those whose calling it is to signal men to freedom, reason and tolerance under God, fail in their generation and the last supporter of the ancient signal of Christian liberty be killed and burned to ashes, still shall men one day, out of disillusionment and divine disgust with the empty forms of a dead and dying world, find the path we have trod to this place we hold to-day. Their catharsis, it may be, shall be more complete than ours, and with devotion beyond the call of duty they will bless their time with peace in proportion as great as we have cursed our time with war.

Must we turn down the lamps so low? Can we not be obedient to our vocation and help men and societies of men now to find the greatest treasure given by God—the soul, the soul by which mankind can approach, though it be from afar, the goodness of the Lord?

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## *Messianism as Seen To-day*

R. F. RATTRAY, M.A., PH.D.

“ There is no royal road to unlearning, and you have a great deal to unlearn.”  
—Samuel Butler, *Erewhon Revisited*.

**I**T may be worth while to set down the things that appear salient in the position of free religion to-day.

First, there is the position that in religion there should be entire intellectual freedom, as is generally taken for granted in every other sphere of experience. The common sense of educated mankind accepts this: only orthodox circles reject it.

Secondly, one must recognize that religion, as commonly treated, in spite of all claims to the contrary, is not based on free interpretation of experience but on one interpretation of history. In Christianity this is outstandingly so. It, therefore, is called for, that one should produce salient facts that show the inadequacy of the orthodox Christian view.

Broadly regarded, Christianity grew out of messianism. Until recently messianism was generally regarded as peculiar to Judaism, but recent scholarship has shown that, on the contrary, it is a far more ancient



and a far more widespread phenomenon. In ancient Egypt, in the third millennium B.C., some of the stories tell of a righteous ruler who is to come (a "good shepherd" they call him, meaning a good king), who shall bring justice and happiness for all. History shows that when people have experienced dire adversity, there has naturally arisen among them a longing for a leader to lead them out of their troubles.

The reason why messianism especially flourished among the Jews is that when they came to settle in Palestine, their expectations of a land flowing with milk and honey were cruelly disappointed. Palestine as is well known, is about the size of Wales, hilly, with an impossible river; and its fatality was that it was surrounded by the great military power of antiquity and therefore was foredoomed to be invaded, fought over, subdued, time after time—by Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, Persia, Greece, Rome, and so on. This foredoomed the Jews to recurrent suffering. The salient fact about them is that by enduring suffering they have attained eminence. Their recurrent suffering accounts for messianism having appeared so much among them. *Isaiah* contains accounts of a number of messiahs; for example, Cyrus. But the one that was to become important historically was Immanuel. One of the greatest of historical mistakes was that the Hebrew word meaning a young woman came to be understood to mean a virgin in the now-famous sentence, "A young woman will conceive . . ." In the 11th century A.D. the great Jewish commentator Rashi argued that this prophecy referred to an immediate future: the bride of *Isaiah* would conceive a son and this would be a sign of the deliverance of Israel from the fury of Rasin, king of Syria and the son of Romelia. Early in the 18th century, Anthony Collins pointed out that the reference was to a young woman in the days of Ahaz, and, according to *Isaiah viii*, Ahaz "went unto the prophetess, and she conceived and bare a son," and in verse 8 a person is named Immanuel. One view is *Isaiah*, that of the Revd. W. A. Wordsworth, is that it is messianic in purpose throughout. Mr. Wordsworth identifies Immanuel with the son of Lo Ruhamah, the daughter of Hosea; claims that the young Messiah lived in turn in Galilee, Philistia, Moab, and Jerusalem; believes that he was taken captive to Babylon in 701 B.C.; and that he was finally smitten with leprosy.\*

In more of the historical religions than one, arose the idea that God in His real being could not be apprehended by man but that there had come forth from Him an emanation which on its physical side was light and internally was what the Greeks called the *logos*, or the Divine Wisdom. The Greek word at once meant thought, word, reason. This divine creative power was scattered throughout creation, being indeed the creative principle in everything and everybody.

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\*En-Roeh : *The Prophecies of Isaiah the Seer, with Habbaquk, and Nahum.*

When the Alexandrian Empire was formed with its capital of Alexandria, the latter was made a centre for the religions of the world. The Jewish Scriptures were translated into Greek—with far-reaching consequences. In Alexandrianism the doctrine of the *spermatikōs logos* was taken literally. It was the creative principle in the universe "disseminated." On the one hand, it was equated with *pneuma*, the breath of life. It included the meaning semen. On the other hand, the holy spirit was thought of as feminine, as the wife of God, and symbolized by the dove.

As the Jews continued to suffer, messianism continued to appear among them. It produced a new kind of literature, starting with *The Book of Daniel* in 168 B.C. The fundamental notion is that God is indeed an Autocrat. He alone has sovereignty, but he hands it over from time to time to whomsoever He will. At any given moment there is a world-power, the Babylonian, the Median, the Persian, the Seleucid Greek. But this will not last for ever. In the end God Himself will take the dominion into His own hands. The Kingdom of God Himself will be inaugurated and He will reign for ever, protecting his faithful people and rewarding them for all the trials they have undergone at the hands of the heathen. The Anointed of God is one of the features of the coming Kingdom. His function is to judge the heathen and rule as God's Vicegerent over the Saints, when the Great Day comes.\*

Jews came to believe that their Scriptures were full of prophecies of what the Messiah would do and suffer. In *I Enoch* Judas Maccabeus was regarded as the promised Messiah and in *I Maccabees* xiv, 8-15, the blessedness of his reign was painted in Messianic colours, in *II Maccabees* xii, 42ff., Judas Maccabeus is said to have made atonement for the idolatrous Israelites who had fallen in battle: "He did right well and honourably in that he took thought for a resurrection. Wherefore he made the propitiation for them that had died, that they might be released from their sin."

*The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* was written apparently for the Jewish converts of the new "Israelite" kingdom, towards 100 B.C. Some of its utterances attract our special attention :

"Love the Lord through all thy life and one another with a true heart"; "love ye each his brother and put away hatred from your hearts; love one another in deed and in word and in the inclination of the soul"; "love ye one another from the heart and if a man sin against thee, speak peaceably to him and in thy soul hold not guile, and if he repent and confess, forgive him."

"I was anhungered and the Lord himself nourished me. I was alone and God comforted me. I was sick and the Lord visited me. I was in prison and the Lord showed favour to me. I was in bonds and he released me."

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\* Burkitt, *The Earliest Sources for the Life of Jesus*, pp. 61-2.



The successors of the Maccabees after John Hyrcanus were such reprobates that hope in a human Messiah disappeared. In the *Parables of Enoch* (soon after 50 B.C.) the "son of man" of *Daniel* has become the Son of Man, a celestial human being: he has been hidden with God but will one day be revealed.

In the time of Jesus, the Messiah was expected to release the Jews from the Romans, and as the struggle became more and more imminent, the hope of the arrival of this national saviour grew more fervent and passionate, until there was hardly a synagogue in which it was not preached or a family in which it was not eagerly discussed.

It would seem that Jesus believed that he was the Messiah, and set himself to fulfil what were believed to be the prophecies in the Scriptures of what the Messiah must do and suffer. He came to realize that his claims must end in death. The Jews who believed that Jesus was the Messiah formed a community with its centre in Jerusalem.

Paul, living in Tarsus, was cognisant of the mystery cults. The mystery god was immortal; became subject to mortality by incarnation; after having been slain, overcame death by rising from the dead to die no more. For the vast majority, it was only by identifying themselves with an incarnate god who had triumphed over death that they could imagine themselves immortal. In all the mysteries the aim was such a union, conceived as being effected by such means as partaking of bread and wine, which were, in a mystical way, regarded as the body and blood of the incarnate deity. In this way the participant actually acquired the divine body and blood, substituting them for his own and acquiring immortality. The notion of a World-Redeemer had become international.

Paul became a persecutor of the followers of Jesus. In terms of modern psychology, he thus acquired a guilt complex. He had a vision of Jesus and accepted him as the Messiah. Is it not clear that in the mind of Paul the conviction came that Jesus by his incarnation and death was also *the* mystery God, the world redeemer? The Jew in Paul was appealed to by the notion that the hopes of his people were thus fulfilled.

The word "Messiah" was understood to mean "Anointed,"\* and became in Greek "Christos." The key word in the mysteries was *Kurios*, "Lord." Among the Jews the name "Yahweh" was too sacred to be uttered and for it was substituted "Adonai," meaning "Lord." In the Septuagint this was translated *Kurios*. Hence the phrase "Lord Jesus Christ" and the like. Paul was not interested in the life and teaching of Jesus but in the Second Coming, the Judgment and the Resurrection. The Second Coming would take place in the lifetime of those still alive, suddenly without warning. Paul turned primitive Christianity into a world religion.

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\*By a curious assonance it could mean in Egyptian "Son of Iah."

In the various Christian centres traditions about Jesus were accumulated. At first sight it is surprising that the first of the Christian gospels known to us was written about thirty years after the time of Jesus. But as matters appeared to the early Christians, what need was there to write concerning Jesus when any day might see his appearance in glory? But in the course of time there arose a demand for an account of the life of Jesus which justified the claims made on his behalf and the gospel. It is evident that the compilers of the gospels put together material that was influenced by certain convictions. One was that the Jewish Scriptures abounded in oracles or prophecies as to what the Messiah, when he came, would do and suffer, and that Jesus fulfilled them. If one knew that Jesus was the Messiah, then one knew that the Messianic prophecies had been fulfilled by him.\* Consequently, one "searched the Scriptures" for Messianic prophecies and proved that Jesus was the Messiah by his fulfilment of them. "It was no uncommon thing in some early Christian circles to have recourse to fictitious narratives for the purpose of safeguarding the interests of the faith. Men in whom the historical conscience was feeble were easily persuaded that events necessary to establish beliefs which they firmly held *must* have happened, and from that it was a short step to the statement that they actually had occurred."†

It is needless to pursue the historical narrative further. We can see how the Second Coming was explained as the descent of the Holy Spirit and the consequent growth of the doctrine of the Trinity. Gnosticism came to influence Christianity and the Christ was identified with the Logos. We can read the sorry story of Constantine and the imposition of orthodoxy, the taking over by the Christian community of the organization and much more of the Roman Empire.

And yet, down to the present, in the "Agreed Syllabus," in nearly all schools, in nearly all churches and Sunday Schools, and as the Christian Year goes round, the great public is given, in the name of authority an interpretation of history whose basis we have shown. In the Carol Service at King's College, Cambridge, as broadcast, people are given to understand that the belief in the fulfilment of prophecy is well founded. The libretto of Handel's *Messiah* is an influence of incalculable power. But now turn back to *Isaiah* and remember that Mr. Wordsworth may be right. Read chapter ix, read chapter liii with the possibility in mind that it referred to the Messiah who came out of Galilee and became a leper.

I am one of those who recognize that the old belief in the origin of the pearl as being woven round a grain of sand is a parable of what has

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\*A crucial instance is when the writer, misunderstanding parallelism, makes Jesus ride on two animals at once.

† These are the words of the Revd. Adam Fyfe Findlay, D.D., in *Christianity in the Light of Modern Knowledge*: he wrote them with reference to the apocryphal gospels but in truth they have a wider reference.



happened in history, but surely the world of to-day requires that we should discriminate clearly between myth and history. It has for long enough been obvious that young men find themselves committed to the ministry of an orthodoxy and have lost their freedom to be scrupulous in intellectual honesty. At a recent conference a schoolmaster reported that the senior boys believe that scientists are honest but ministers of religion are not. As Butler said long ago, the latter have taken a bad shilling and are not very scrupulous about passing it on. It was in 1873 that he wrote in *The Fair Haven* :

"Of all those engaged in training our young men for Holy Orders, of all Bishops and tutors at colleges, whose very profession it is to be lovers of truth and candour, who are paid for being so, and who are mere shams and wolves in sheep's clothing if they are not ever on the look-out for falsehood, to make war upon it as the enemy of our souls—not one, no, not a single one, so far as I know, has raised his voice in protest. If a man has not lost his power of weeping, let him weep for this; if there is any who recognizes the crime of self-deception as perhaps the most subtle and hideous of all forms of sin, let him lift up his voice and proclaim it now, for the times are not of peace, but of the sowing of winds for the reaping of whirlwinds, and of the calm that is in the centre of the hurricane."

At the beginning of this century Mr. Bernard Shaw repeated the warning :

"When religious and ethical formulæ become so obsolete that no man of strong mind can believe them, they have also reached the point at which no man of high character will profess them; and from that moment until they are formally disestablished, they stand at the door to keep out every able man who is not a sophist or a liar. A nation which revises its parish councils once in three years, but will not revise its articles of religion once in three hundred, even when these articles avowedly began as a political compromise dictated by Mr. Facing-Both-Ways, is a nation that needs remaking."\*

What is needed so urgently to-day is the free and unfettered interpretation of experience as a whole, of all human experience, the explanation of the highest experience of truth, goodness and beauty of all mankind. And the tragedy is that while the Christian Church attributes to Jesus such Beatitudes as "Blessed are the merciful" and "Blessed are the pure in heart," the great parables of the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, and the talents, the great stories of his forgivingness, his appreciation of the generous widow and of children, and to Paul the 13th chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, the salience of these things is being obscured by historical beliefs that are becoming increasingly obsolete.

## *Prayer and World Crisis*

G. STEPHENS SPINKS, M.A., PH.D.

**M**OST of us would, I think, accept the suggestion that in some sense these are eschatological days. Eschatology—the theory of the Last Things, the doctrine of Death and Judgment—is part of the mental climate of our time. Never before in the modern world has there been such a lively expectancy of impending doom, and never before such a wide belief that the End is at hand. The prophets upon whom the burden of the Word falls, have given us not some vague apocalyptic time and a time and a half, but have given us a date, ten, twenty years. A sense of impending finality lies across the consciousness of our age. It does not matter for the moment whether we ourselves share these feelings or not, our world is eschatologically expectant, and that is to be noted as a spiritual characteristic of our time.

Some few months ago, M. Joliot-Curie, who is High Commissioner in France for the development of Atomic Energy, called attention to the fact that the States which belong to the United Nations are so united that they are spending seven thousand million pounds this year (1947) on security by arms, that there is going on in America, Britain, and, we may suppose, in Russia, feverish activity for the production of new weapons of war. M. Joliot-Curie said that atomic weapons were but part of the new armoury of war. Secret scientific researches are producing so many kinds of new and secret weapons that even declarations of war in future would be secret. A nation would become aware that its crops were being destroyed by an unaccountable blight; that strange epidemics were breaking out, and that the still-birth rate had suddenly increased. A nation would become aware that some unknown enemy was waging silent and undeclared warfare upon it. Scientists were already working, said M. Joliot-Curie, upon the production of specially bred pestilences, and the use of biochemical weapons directed against the hormones which control the growth of plants, animals and men, which would act like specially selective week-killers. These things are engaging the attention of scientists working under conditions of secrecy all over the world.

Our age is heavy with the thought of death. The urgency of old eschatologies assumes a new significance. When Isaiah says that  
 “the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old as doth a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner”



one feels that the ancient prophet and the modern physicist carry the same burden of thought. *The Revelation of St. John the Divine* with a very little touching-up would be as modern as Mr. John Hersey's *Penguin Hiroshima*. Mr. Hersey, when he describes how a Jesuit priest in Hiroshima passed a naked living woman who seemed to have been burned from head to toe, and was red all over; when he describes the four square miles of reddish-brown scar which had been the centre of the city, with street upon street of collapsed city-blocks; the piles of ashes, the naked trees, and canted telephone poles horribly "accentuating the horizontality of everything," Mr. Hersey is in line with St. John the Divine—

"And the first trumpet sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth, and the third part of the earth was burnt up, and the third part of the trees, and all green grass was burnt up."

When the writer of *The Apocalypse* says that he

"saw a star from heaven fallen unto the earth. . . .  
and the angel opened the pit of the abyss"

what he is there describing is something our world has known, something that has happened to two cities, something that might happen to two continents.

We may or may not share these expectations—that is not immediately important—but there is a perceptible smell of death about our politics; quiet thoughtful people are mentally going about the world "looking their last on all things lovely." There is a feeling that the End is at hand. "And in those days," says St. John—it might quite easily be M. Joliot-Curie speaking—

"And in those days men shall seek death."

People in pubs do not put it this way, of course, but what is called in Eschatologies *The End*, we are calling "World Crisis." It is with this situation as our background that we have to consider the relevance of prayer. I take it that I am exempt from discussing the causes of our world situation, from considering the political ways and means of averting disaster—though it is clearly our duty if we know of any such political means to pray for a clear mind and a pure will that we may employ them in a situation whose material conditions seem ripe for ruin.

First: let us make it clear that Prayer is not just one more weapon among the many which are at this moment being pressed into the supposed interests of particular national securities. Prayer is not an air-raid precaution; nor is it a means of persuading the Hands of the Divine Compassion to stretch, somewhere in the strato-sphere, above this country, a kind of invisible net by which to catch projectiles malignantly released; it is not to be thought of as a prophylactic against artificially disseminated

germs, nor yet as a spiritual vaccine capable of counteracting the effects of biological warfare. Prayers will not keep the waters sweet, not the air swept of insidious diseases; they will not cause the sun to bring to fertility crops whose roots have been chemically poisoned; they will not unseal the doors of the womb to give birth to children if the hormones of reproduction have been impaired by scientific hostilities. If the world falls under the Judgment of a Moral Nemesis the material consequences will not, I think, be averted by prayer. It is this sense of Nemesis which constitutes for us twentieth century men our modern eschatology. When all things material are threatened with annihilation—whether you express the threat in terms of “heaven and earth passing away,” or in terms of the new Sodom and Gomorrah, the cities that went up “as the smoke of a furnace”—when all things material are threatened, when the weight of that threat rests heavily upon the consciousness of ordinary sensual men, then our apprehension of spiritual things begins to become clearer.

The Evangelist records Jesus as saying—

“When ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars see that ye be not troubled!”

We, who know both the wars and the rumours, are entitled to ask what are the grounds of such a confidence? Such confidence cannot be found in any yet-known military preventative to the atom bomb, nor in any yet-known antidote to germ warfare. The ground of that confidence is not in human ingenuity, the ground of that confidence is not in time at all—it is beyond time. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my Word shall not pass away.”

The ground of that confidence is very old. It was old before St. Augustine wrote his *City of God*, but never before had it received such a clear-cut expression. There is something strikingly modern about the ruthlessness of his analysis. He looks at the ruin of the Roman world, estimates its moral failures, its failures of nerve and will, and asks, what else could you expect? Rome was mortal, it was founded on fratricide. But God had given its life an eternal significance by using it as the imperfect instrument in time of a perfect and eternal intention—as the midwife of Christ’s Kingdom. Then, having put history into its proper perspective, he proceeds to what is the Church’s essential message in the face of time’s violences and vicissitudes—the *indestructibility of eternal life*. He ends his massive assessment of the significance of history viewed under the light of eternity with the assurance that “there remaineth, therefore, a rest for the people of God.” Does that ring true for us to-day? Not, if we take what I call a secular view of history.

Secular views of history produce imposing theories of the systole and diastole of events—the dialectic of capitalist cause and proletarian

effect. But these are only theories; the fact that there are so many of them makes it clear that secular history is without the real clue. From the secular point of view there is no ultimate significance in world events. It is at this point that the Eschatological view comes into its own. It comes with an emphasis, exaggerated, perhaps, but urgent, an emphasis upon the spiritual significance of what is happening. The Eschatological view of history is not always right. But there are circumstances in which it is right, and this may be one of them. For the Eschatological view is not concerned with the continuance of time, which is the secular point of view, but with its abolition as a prelude to judgment and a new beginning. Its burden is in the words "Behold, I make all things new!" History viewed purely as a continuing time sequence is for the eschatologist what Henry Ford called it in the witness box during the course of his libel suit with the *Chicago Tribune* in 1919—History, as a secular time-sequence, is bunk! Mr. Ford may not have been aware of the fact, but that remark is an eschatological judgment. History has no ultimate meaning if explained only in terms of time; time has meaning only in terms of eternity. That is what Eschatology is, an attempt to wring a meaning out of Eternity for events which go down into the temporal abyss.

With the radio-active dust of Hiroshima and Nagasaki still circulating above the surface of our planet, it becomes easier to believe in prayer—the prayer of Adoration, the prayer of Acceptance, the prayer of Renunciation and Complete Surrender. Without this attitude, current history has no ultimate significance.

At this point this paper becomes a personal confession. We have now reached the stage in our discussion where faith goes beyond the point to which theory, psychology, or liturgical considerations can bring us. We step ahead of these considerations and look at this matter as it affects us personally.

During the war I was often out of the house for whole nights on end, and in order that my mother should not so often be left alone during London's most dangerous air-raids, we put our furniture into store and stayed for a while with friends in the same neighbourhood whose house was large enough to accommodate us without difficulty. My books were packed into boxes and went off with the rest of our chattels to the furniture repository. I never expected to see any of them again. I felt that what the incendiary bombs spared would doubtless be scattered by high explosives. Later on we set up house again. I expected to feel considerable pleasure at unpacking my books and re-arranging them upon their shelves. But there was no pleasure—something had evaporated, something that has never come back. For the first time in my life I understood the meaning of the words—

"the world passeth away, and the lust thereof."



In order to live through a world-crisis we have to shift our personal centre of gravity away from our own possessions on to something else. "How hardly," says Jesus, "shall they that have riches—how hardly shall a poor man with a few books—enter into the Kingdom of God."

We need a great irruption, we need to be stripped of our possessions, our ambitions, and our self-centredness to see where our true treasure lies, to know with Whom our soul has its truest conversation.

It may sound a little exaggerated, eschatological statements often do—a world-crisis cannot be described in completely logical language—but it is in eschatological times that most men learn to pray. It is when the stocks and shares begin to fall, when even 2½ per cent. seems a most desirable stability, when the saying, "as safe as houses," becomes a painful cynicism, it is then, I suggest, we get near to the real intensity of the Lord's Prayer. There is a sense in which The Lord's Prayer is an eschatological prayer. "Thy Kingdom come, Thy Will be done on earth as it is in Heaven." Our world will not give up its kingdoms, its power and its glory, until it has come to ruin; only in the moment when the flames threaten to consume all that we treasure, only then are men willing to consent to the establishment of another kingdom, a kingdom in which the important, and the consequential, are put down from their seats.

Eschatological times give us the chance to pray, indeed they drive us to pray, as we have never prayed before. It is only when all other things fail that we really pray "Thy Will be done." And that for the one sufficient reason that few men ever pray for God's will to be done until their own has utterly failed them. Not until we have been betrayed, and sold—not for thirty pieces of silver, but for some right or left-wing ideology—not until we feel our world has been delivered into the hands of sinful men, do we put out our hands to God. And the mercy of creation is this, not that God does for us what the writer of the *Book of Job* thought of God as doing for Job—restoring him to his former state of prestige, comfort and security—the mercy of creation is this, that God accepts us when we have nothing left at all, we who were not willing to give ourselves to Him when we had everything.

Not until we are stripped, and our hands and feet drawn out upon the cross of a whole generation's suffering, not until then do we pray the Prayer of Ultimate Surrender, "Father into Thy Hands," into *Thy Hands*, we who were captains of our soul, masters of our fate, and would-be masters of other people's fate whenever the opportunity arose. It takes an eschatological urgency to bring us to the ultimate prayers.

For myself, the spiritual world has become more real since two bombs flashed down upon two Japanese cities. This is the End—even though our civilisation should enjoy a hundred years of peace—this is End of an age. I think I see now what Jesus may have meant

when he talked about the End of the World. I think it was not so much that he saw the end of Jerusalem, the end of Rome, the end of our planet; what he saw was men rushing to a point in human history where for a little while they would offer up their souls to God *entirely without conditions*. When a generation begins to feel "other refuge have I none," that moment is for the secular world the Eschatological End—even though no single house falls down, nor a window pane be broken.

Since those two bombs were released over Japan, I seem to have seen—I speak quite personally—more clearly what the shape of this world is. Whatever the cartographers may set down as the outline of our world, that outline is to-day the map of Palestine. Palestine is once again the map of our human consciousness. The life of thirty years which lay between the Cradle and the Cross is, I suggest, the recurring pattern that makes sense of our secular history.

The spiritual significance of secular history is that it is the unfolding of an eternal archetype. "Man's business upon this planet" since Jesus was born in Bethlehem is to live that pattern over and over again. In a sense it is easier to do so to-day because ours is, as his was, an eschatological age. In ages which are settled, where there is no eschatological urgency, the life of Jesus must appear strange. The life of Jesus was an alien pattern in the period of Europe's Enlightenment. In that age, and in all such ages, the mental outline of the world more nearly resembled the shape of ancient Greece than that of New Testament Palestine. In such ages the sayings of Jesus appear bizarre and exaggerated—as indeed they are. It is only in ages like our own that we can see any sense in some of his strangest sayings. In an eschatological age he is Lord, and his prayers are the prayers of an eschatological age.

If we wish to see the relation of prayer to eschatology, we must look at the eschatological life of Jesus. His very birth is treated as an eschatological event; Mary's Magnificat is really an early edition of the Red Flag. Early Christian Communism had this much at least in common with modern Communism, that it looked for the end of the existing order. In what other age, save an eschatological age, could it be expected that there could be a system of government so strange that it would fill "the hungry with good things, and the rich it would send empty away"? In what other state of affairs could it be expected that "he would put down the mighty from their seat, and exalt the humble and meek"? I suggest that we understand the teaching of Jesus better when we hear it uttered in an hour of World-Crisis. And now the hour of World-Crisis is ours. Which means that what he prayed for is what we have to pray for; his prayer-life is ours. And men rarely pray except in their distress. "Out of the depths have I called unto Thee, O Lord," and that is where most of us begin to pray the ultimate prayers.

Periods of world-crisis are the times when men cry out from the depths—when they give up (if only for a while) their pre-occupation with shorter working hours, with higher salaries and greater creature comforts, and put their life into another pair of Hands. We ordinary sensual men begin to pray the ultimate prayers only under extreme pressure. Now, as never before in the life-time of any one of us, comes the chance to live as Jesus lived, and to pray as he prayed, asking nothing for ourselves save only this—to do the Father's will. It is very hard indeed to live like Jesus when the world is settled. Then most of his sayings appear to be so difficult as to be quite irrelevant. But they appear to be less irrelevant now, when we are moving into an eschatological climate such as that in which his mind moved.

When ordinary decent sober-minded, prudent men, the loveable Nicodemus-es of the world (and in one sense Nicodemus is the second name of every single one of us who has tried to spend himself in the conventional services of our traditional God) face up to the fact that everything we ordinarily value could so very easily be but a little dust floating about the world in a great radio-active belt—then we come face to face with our real destiny, we know that in some sense we must be born again! When all we have worked for looks as if it is going down in ultimate defeat (the secular view of history) then under the pressure of torment, of doubt, we come to pray the last prayer of Jesus on his cross—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"—and in that moment we experience the uttermost reality of prayer; in that moment we admit defeat and still cry unto God. That cry is the moment of the Eschatological Triumph. That is the moment when the Prodigal comes home, the moment when the Father is able to say, "This, my son, was dead, and is alive again!"

The real End, the Eschatological Hour, is not the ashes, the houses in collapse, nor the terrible horizontality of everything; the real End is a triumph snatched out of the moment of secular defeat, the triumphant moment when we who never offered ourselves to God before, except upon our own liberal terms, now offer ourselves unconditionally.

Robert Browning wrote an imaginary epitaph for one who was burned alive.

"I was some time in being burned,  
But at the close a Hand came through  
The fire above my head, and drew  
My soul to Christ, whom now I see." [\*]

Without the fire it may be some of us will not see that Face.

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\* Browning: "*Christmas Eve and Easter Day.*"



## *The Danger of Utopias*

BY HUBERT G. WOODFORD, B.A.

IT was Oscar Wilde who said : "England will never be civilised until she has added Utopia to her dominions." And by this we understand that he meant that neither this nor any other country can claim to be civilised unless it possesses ideals and visions, and that where these are lacking the people perish.

Utopias are born out of a conscious dissatisfaction with the present and with things as they are, and from Plato to H. G. Wells, this grown-up game of "Let's Pretend" has always provided a refuge from trouble and an escape from confusion. When the present state of the world displeases him, the man of imagination may conjure up a dream of what might be. And so Plato, living in a period of social degeneration after the Peloponnesian War, and shrinking from the government responsible for the death of his beloved master Socrates, created his dream-state *The Republic*. Sir Thomas More living in an age of brutality and the most blatant injustice, found some consolation in inventing the discovery of a desirable land where justice and right dealing could be found.

People who invent Utopias seem to do so rather as a pleasant way of escape from reality than with the intention of effecting any actual reform. Plato, for instance, did not believe that a State such as he depicted was practicable. And Sir Thomas More actually called his ideal land "Utopia"—a word meaning "Nowhere," whilst Samuel Butler named his *Erewhon*—an anagram on "Nowhere." And when we use the word "Utopian" it is to describe a romantic, an ideal and often quite improbable land of our dreams.

Bernard Shaw, who has endeavoured throughout a long life to laugh us out of many of our romanticisms, has given us his Utopia in *Back to Methuselah*, but he pitches it well into the future—the year 31,920 or "as far as thought can reach."

The greatest of popular modern Utopians in this country has been the late H. G. Wells, and the *Cambridge History of English Literature* says of him, that his greatest merit was that "he helped to keep hope alive in an age of despair." Yet he himself, died without hope, and his last will and testament to the world was entitled "The Human Mind at the End of its Tether."

And when we ask why it was that this great inspirer of hope in an age of despair died hopeless, the answer is simply this: Wells lived long enough to see many of his most terrible prophesies fulfilled and so few of his lovely dreams realised. Two World Wars and the dawn of the Atomic Age was the world's answer to one, who through a long life had embodied in his work the persistent fallacy, that Science, which had done so much for man could do everything.

Instinctively as a creative artist, Wells admitted the power of the irrational in man: constructively as a man of Science, he was irritated by the irrational, and tried to reduce life to something like mathematical certainty.

At the beginning of the present century, Wells won the new large-reading public with his Utopian dreams of socially applied Science. The time coincided with a national reaction against the squalid Imperialism of the South African War and the rise of a new social consciousness among the people. And he gave us a series of Utopias: *New Worlds for Old*, *Anticipations*, *A Modern Utopia*, *A World Set Free*, *Men like Gods*, and a multitude of millennial constructions. Wells came to believe in his own fables, and imagined that one could plan for ultimate perfection. And as an old man he came to realise that all he had done was to sweep and garnish a room for the seven devils of Dictatorship, Gangsterdom and misapplied Science to enter in and possess.

That there can ever by a static condition of peace, plenty and happiness for all mankind through all the ages, and in all the regions of the world is the delusion of dons with comfortable fellowships, or of well-placed persons with assured incomes and pensions. And the creators of these Utopias have generally omitted human nature from their reckoning, and various and sometimes comical have been their attempts to manipulate this uncommonly tough product. As you read them, one after another, the same thing happens—human nature is always breaking in to confound these nicely planned worlds.

Sir Thomas More evaded rather than handled the difficulty by placing his Utopia "beyond the line equinoctial—somewhere between India and Brazil." H.G. Wells asked help from heaven and procured a comet whose sanitary exhalations changed mankind from the very roots. Civil war did for William Morris what it has never done for anybody else, and according to Edward Bellamy, "the change had long been foreseen." "Public opinion had become fully ripe for it, and the whole mass of the people was behind it." Nobody's head was punched and nobody's throat was cut. That was the dream. Unfortunately we know better, and Russia's approximation to Utopia could hardly be called a bloodless revolution.

It is perhaps well to recognise that the requisites for turning Utopias from dreams into realities would seem to be religion and a small country. And at present the world seems determined to ignore religion on the one hand and to worship bigness or what the Americans call "Jumboism" on the other hand. But without religion and a small country there can be no Utopia. The New Testament proposals contain the first, and all the best schemes of planning in the past without exception have the second. Plato's *Republic* would have been of Athenian dimensions, a territory about the size of Middlesex. Sir Thomas More's island was 200 miles broad and had 500 miles of coastline. Morris's "Nowhere" was of course England—apparently without Scotland. Bellamy looked back to a United States which had shrunk to little more than the size of Massachusetts. And so it has proved in real life. The happiest countries within our experience have been the smallest—when they have been left to themselves. Switzerland, the best democracy the world has yet seen; Denmark, the peasant-farmer's paradise; Holland and Belgium, to name only these. And our own country, when it was called "Merrie England" was about the same size as those just named.

Maybe the shrinkage of our Empire to-day may be a step in the right direction.

It is perhaps significant that it was during the age of expansion, when trade was booming, the Empire growing, cigars 4d. each and income tax negligible, and we seemed bound in an express train straight for the Kingdom of Heaven, that Unitarianism voiced its faith in "the progress of mankind upward and onward for ever." Then came the crash of 1914 and the bigger crash of 1939, but the Utopians are still with us, and many thoughtful people are beginning to wonder whether we should not be better equipped for the very arduous task of the present if we abandoned our Utopian dreams and the facile philosophy on which they are based for a more realistic approach. It is probable that the so-called New Philosophy of Existentialism, which is likely to be more popular in France than in this country, is the natural revolt against a shallow optimism and an unwillingness to face the facts of existence in all their stark tragedy.

We had our own Existentialists after the first World War, during that decade of despair which followed upon the failure of that War to realise the Utopian ideals for which it had been fought. The titles of some of the books published at this time reflect the philosophy of the age. Here are a few: *Disenchantment*, *Dusty Answer*, *Brief Candles*, *Told by an Idiot*, *Heartbreak House*, *The Hollow Men*, *Those Barren Leaves*, *Brave New World*, *All Our Yesterdays*, *The Waste Land*. Yes, we were Existentialists then, and many alert and active-minded people besides writers and philosophers had got rid not



only of what Bernard Shaw called "the bribe of Heaven," but also the bribe of Hope. And they drew from their very despair their strength and the readiness to work productively without desiring even such reward as hope offers. Our own Thomas Hardy was an Existentialist before the time, when he wrote "If way to the better there be, it exacts a full look at the worst."

The Scientist has realised his Utopian dream, and the splitting of the atom, which was to offer to toiling humanity a godlike leisure and to release power to do the world's work, has split the fabric of cities and threatens to split civilisation itself. We have certainly much to unlearn about those things which are supposed to civilise.

There is sometimes wisdom in retreat, and with the possibility of this country having little raw material in the future for export, we may return to agriculture, and if we go to work properly, may have farm and dairy produce to trade with, and wool once more. And this will put us in a fair way to become what *News from Nowhere* reported us—a small agricultural and fishing community, comparatively poor, instead of this troublesome, far-flung Empire on which the sun of real happiness so seldom rises.

And such a return to simple living would not necessarily be a backward step to a rude and uncultured society. England could still be England without possessing the multitudinous gadgets displayed at the "We Can Make It" exhibition. The England of Shakespeare's day was lit by candlelight, and also by a light that never was on sea or land, which shone from the Bard of Stratford.

Perhaps the sanest of all dreams of the future came from one, who, unlike the general run of Utopians, did take full account of human nature, had no illusions about any form of planning which did not plan the man, and who always concentrated upon a radical change in the individual as the basis of all reform. Jesus would have agreed with Herbert Spencer that "there is no political alchemy by which you can get golden conduct out of leaden instincts"; that the soul of all reform is the reform of the soul, and that the golden heart must come to man before the golden age can come to the world.

The danger of Utopias lies in the fact that an inherent mental and moral lethargy in mankind leads it to look ever on before for the realisation of its dreams, and thus Utopias are seldom turned into Eutopias. Man dreams away his earthly existence, assuring himself that "the best is yet to be" and merely fills the air with the cries of his complaining and discontent. There was an essential wisdom in the words of Vauvenargues: "Plan as if you were going to live for ever; act as if you were going to die to-morrow." For everything in the world-situation to-day proclaims that it is indeed a race against time.

## *John Redwood Anderson: Poet and Seer*

ARNOLD H. LEWIS, B.D.

THE world of letters is slowly becoming aware of John Redwood Anderson: of his importance as thinker and imaginative writer, and of the sheer quality of his poetry. Although we live, or rather because we live in a time of rapid change, a time of instability, it is profoundly strengthening to read poetry that spans the centuries, and looks forth into the indiscernible future. He is no soothsayer, and no facile optimist, but one of the Twiceborn who are keenly aware of the darker strain in things; but, without any prediction, and without any ostensible consolation, he indicates the supreme worth of personality.

And he does this in the language of poetry, without the use of an archaic poetic diction or the meanness of the current vernacular. And he does it with a full consciousness of the peculiar problems of our time, as well of those of every age.

But it is as a poet that he thinks, feels and writes. As a poet, he is unprepared to put the personal element in his apprehensions to the discard, in the hope of achieving an impersonal objectivity. Rather than do this, he is prepared to incur the risk of seeming to describe nothing but his own state of mind: its value is its validity. Whatever correspondence we may find between thought and external things, thought is an experience of a human mind, and the richer it is the less amenable is it to expression in the everyday language which is primarily an instrument for describing objects.

Hence the form of poetry, which is not an artificial device for the adornment of speech, but a modification of language for the extension of its significance, by giving to it an audible structure that qualifies and completes the import of the words. This is to claim for the sound-patterns which distinguish poetry, like those of music, a sacramental value: they exist in the physical, but for the spiritual. Sound-waves and accentual stresses are mechanical events, but used for his own purposes by the poet they can complete the Attic of thought with the Doric of feeling. But the matters expressed by these two dialects are not two streams, one of thought and one of feeling, but a single impression of thought and feeling. Hence it is irrational to dissociate the form of poetry from its content: its structure is a part of its meaning; and it is as futile to paraphrase a poem as to copy a Turner sunset in pen and ink.

When Anderson writes of the totality of things, of God and of man's life and destiny, it is because these sublime objects dominate his mind. He makes no claim to esoteric knowledge, and no attempt to inculcate beliefs. He is the least didactic of men. His thought cannot be summarised as a body of teachings. In any case, it is desecration to turn fine poetry into pedestrian prose. A grateful reader may, perhaps, act the cicerone, but will refuse to play the part of Circe.

Having a philosophical, as well as an imaginative mind, Anderson does not rebel against the stringent claims of logic in the field of reason: conceptual thought depends for its cogency on their due observance. But there are levels in our experience, and especially in the experience of a true poet, so remote from everyday affairs that everyday language cannot discuss them except in symbol or by analogy. We have no nomenclature, no syntax, for the events of our inner life, except by the use of some form of metaphor. Music can suggest their feeling-tone, but poetry alone can discuss them, and then only at a remove, in symbols.

Reference to music is almost inevitable. In his youth and early maturity, Anderson served a long and devoted apprenticeship to music, and to the violin in particular. The construction of his verse, which often looks irregular on the page, is dictated by a masterly command of metre, and collaterally by a regard for phrasing (in the musical sense of the word) which subordinates but does not suppress the formal regularities of feet and lines. In precisely this way a good violinist or pianist gives due regard to the time of the music but feels it as gathered-up into longer and more significant passages.

The first poem in *Transvaluations* ends with the following lines, which are obviously a close quotation from words in the Fourth Gospel,

‘And the wind blows  
whither it lists; and no man knows  
whence, nor when, nor how it comes—nor whither the wind  
goes.’

Everyone would agree that this is metrical verse, but the action of phrasing, as in music, must come in to explain its remarkable rhythmical effect. In the following, again, an entirely free speech-pattern accompanies a metrical song-pattern: an aria and a recitative rendered simultaneously! It is from *Haunted Islands*.

‘The seas  
fade and grow grey—  
the transformation and the glow  
passes from sky and land;  
come, ere the day  
dies utterly—give me your hand  
and let us go.’



If as von Bülow said, "In the beginning was rhythm" we cannot dismiss as mere technicalities the grammar of that language but for which we might still be more dumb and helpless.

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We still use names for poets and their works which imply creative-ness. The worth of poetry depends largely on its writer's constructive power. This, again, depends on the richness and resourcefulness of his mind, but chiefly on his skill in invention. A fragment of history or legend is enough to furnish Anderson with the outline of what becomes a considerable poem when developed by his fertile and strongly associative imagination. *Transvaluations* provides many examples, as the poem, Icarus, from the Greek story, and in scriptural subjects like that describing the visit of the child Jesus to the Temple.

'They heard him gravely, chin on hand,

and each one in his mood

said in himself: I understand.

And not one understood.'

Another biblical narrative provides the theme of his dramatic poem, *Babel*, also published in an acting edition as *The Tower to Heaven*. Here the old story develops into a study of the consciousness of a superman, and the tragic grandeur of his ascendancy and downfall.

*The Vortex* illustrates aspects of the life, or soul, of a great city, as represented in typical persons, places and occupations. The following lines from a poem on an iron foundry is a characteristic example of Anderson's free fantasia treatment, in this instance, of a commonplace subject.

'Here is creation! Here the strife

That makes new uses from old use outworn;

The chiefest task whereunto life

And all the forms of life were born.

'Here is creation! So is wrought

All loveliness of art:

The molten splendours of the heart

Cooled in the exquisite moulds of thought.

'So the sublime

First fluid substance of the fiery stars

Was poured long since in the cool troughs of space:

So was earth fashioned—and its face

Bears still, mountain and valley, the ancient scars

Left by the wetted sand of time.

And so shall all man's nobler moments be

The pattern of his fate,

And patient wisdom and fierce love create

The fabric of futurity.'

The same kind of imaginative expansion is employed of ever greater motifs in his most recent publications, notably in *Paris Symphony* in which the Aphrodite of Melos (subject of the First Movement) is used as a symbol for all man's infinite desire, and the Winged Victory of Samothrace (Fourth Movement) as the symbol of his indomitable striving. We note with admiration how the accident which robbed the Victory of her head (as the Aphrodite lost her arms) makes the Victory an apter symbol of life's tireless pursuit of an unseen end.

“ For you, O Life

that are in all the world, and that I worship  
in every pulse loud with the hymn of blood,  
blind and deaf

pursue your everlasting voyage :

blind to the wreckage

strewn the angry sea,

deaf to the cries that cling

like hands upon you;

nor know you whither

your curved prow points,

nor are you guided

by any light of yellow dawns—

but, rather, by some sacred,

blind and deaf instinct :

but, rather, by the buffets

of winds against you

facing the loud storms;

nor know you in what port

—if, then, in any port !—

beyond the last dishevelled distances

your wings shall fall

folded,

at last, in peace.

Yet blind, and deaf, and knowing not

whither your rage of action goes :

flinging the evil and the good

in two whipped spindrifts from your speed :

giving to one a crown, to one

the purple obsequies of war :

in triumph glorious, and yet

more glorious in failure :

daughter of earth,

yet, by your will, creating

new heavens in the wastes of time :

you still,  
 on the curved prow of mighty circumstance,  
 stand,  
 sublime winged Victory,  
 facing for ever  
 the golden perils of eternal dawn."

\* \* \* \* \*

It will be observed that the author's mind is not only richly creative, but creative of the greater from the less, of universal processes out of particular events; its habitual tendency is to move by induction from the instance to the law; its habitat is space and its period eternity.

In the volume called *English Fantasies* there is a section entitled "Standing Waters"—a name that in itself promises no great depth! But each of its ten poems finds in the tarn, or the street puddle, or the park lake, a microcosm of vaster waters, or even of "that immortal sea which brought us hither," and thus gives to it dignity and representative value.

Of the drinking pool, we read—

"Does not the dawn's quick ear  
 surprise its gentle orisons? The sun  
 find his bright image in its constant eye?  
 And all the changing lights of day dwell there  
 with the white passage of the silent clouds?  
 Yes, and at night, faint in a cloudless night,  
 its heart receives within it, like a vision  
 seen in the pause of ecstasy, the hushed  
 mystery of the total universe,  
 star upon star forever. . . ."

It is perhaps because of his profound belief in the human spirit as a particular presentation of Deity, that Anderson has turned again and again to the Great Man theme, as illustrated in *Babel*, already mentioned. Important poems of his, not yet published, treat of Moses, Akhnaton, and Hannibal, as representative of mankind, with the implicit thought that we may see in them an intimation of a godlike personality and destiny, as man's generic birthright. Like all true poets he comes to know his subjects by entering into them and learning of them from within; and it might be foreseen that sooner or later he would escape from all limitations and make the very universe his subject, describing it as it may be supposed to be for itself. This Anderson undertakes in *The Fugue of Time*, the second volume of *Triptych*. To a deeply religious mind like his, this can be nothing less than an attempt to describe the Being of God, as it is to Himself, which a finite being can at the most do figuratively, mystically and in part. The fugal Subject which transfuses the whole



book is the unutterable value of God for Himself, as symbolised in the human language which is all that we can master, by the words : "I AM, AND I AM THAT I AM."

Among the various aspects described (as from within) Logos says :—

" I am ! and all my spirit cries  
to be and to go forth a myriadfold,  
to make ten million million destinies,  
its crowns and its calamities,  
take on me time with all its centuries,  
its births and deaths—to be ensouled  
innumerably in life !"

But all these partials, taken together, can hint only the the nature of the divine and inconceivable Totality in Whom all things consist.

Lyrical, dramatic, and reflective, as each occasion requires, and sometimes (as in *The Tower to Heaven*) all three together, Anderson consistently arouses that ardour for beauty, for truth, for life, which never flags in his own vital being; and, as he arouses it, ministers to its satisfaction. Life—we feel—is even more wonderful than we thought; the tiniest and the greatest things are more accessible, more friendly; no gulf is quite as menacing, and no ascent as steep.

And although a poet's greatest gift is the power to see, and to communicate his vision in music, this poet admits us to a mind full of the riches of the world's literature, and alive to the latest adventures of speculative thought.

He is thus distinctively a poet for the present time; but his insight and his expressive power are undated, and will endure.

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# *Paul and the Women*

## A RADICAL RE-ASSESSMENT OF *I CORINTHIANS XI, 2-16*

FRANCIS TERRY, M.A.

**A**N investigation of the place of freedom in Paul's conception of Christ and the nature of Christian life and fellowship, suggests that this is far more important and central than has even yet been realised. For Paul, Jesus is, before everything else, the embodiment and vindication of the liberty of the individual conscience, and the founder of a religious fellowship based upon freedom. This is obscured by the main tradition of Pauline exegesis, a tradition founded by men who were concerned to maintain ecclesiastical authority and who placed the Pastoral Epistles upon at least an equal level with the more authentic writings. Modern research has revised the traditional views on many matters, such as Paul's eschatology and sacramentalism, but, on the topic of freedom, little advance has been made, and the traditional view remains unchallenged and even unexamined. The inconsistencies and temperamental difficulties which Paul shows in working out a radically novel type of religion are treated as typical instead of exceptional. Passages which insist on freedom as a matter of principle are described as mere instances of political fact, (e.g., Paul's attitude on the food controversy), or are virtually explained away. Often the pre-conceived notion of Paul as an authoritative person leads to sheer misinterpretation of what he actually says. A particularly glaring example is to be found in the passage on women, *I Corinthians xi, 2-16*. A detailed examination of this passage may help to show the extent to which traditional interpretation has been vitiated by the authoritarian assumption, and to suggest the sort of discoveries that remain to be made.

In this section Paul discusses the question whether women who take an active part in the conduct of worship should do so bare-headed or wearing a head-dress, and he expressed a vigorous preference for the latter practice. Obviously there must have been circumstances at Corinth which made such discussion necessary, and the recipients of the letter would have had these in mind, and would have interpreted Paul's words by reference to them. We have to deduce these circumstances from the general probabilities of the situation and from such clues as the passage itself provides—and these clues are as likely to be found near the end as at the beginning, for Paul has no need to make a preliminary exposition of what was already familiar to his correspondents. Difficulties of interpretation have arisen because most commentators (dominated by the conception of Paul as an authoritarian person) have formed strong

first impressions from inadequate data in the early verses, and, under the influence of these impressions, have failed to note the very clear indications provided by the concluding verse. In particular, it is usually assumed that some of the women had been breaking an acknowledged rule which prescribed that their heads should be covered, and that Paul is reprimanding this insubordination and excess of individualistic liberty: the whole traditional interpretation of the passage is based upon this assumption and forced into conformity with it.

Verse 16, however, points decisively to a very different situation. Properly translated, it means: "But, if anyone seems (or sees fit) to be contentious, we do not have such a custom, nor do the churches of God." The word "such" obviously refers to the contentious man and his arguments: that is to say, Paul's opponents are arguing that there is (or ought to be) a custom by which women should pray and prophesy bare-headed, and Paul is disclaiming and repudiating that custom. This puts the matter in quite a different light. Paul is not dealing with breaches of an acknowledged rule, nor is he reprimanding individual acts of insubordination: he is opposing an attempt to impose a rule with which he disagrees.

This at once clears up the notorious linguistic difficulty in verse 10. The most natural translation of this verse would be: "For this reason the woman must needs have the right to exercise her own discretion over \*her head (c.f., *Romans ix, 21*, and *I Corinthians ix, 4-6*). This is the interpretation which should be followed unless it is shown to be necessarily excluded by the context, and, if there are two possible views about the context, we should incline to that which admits of the natural translation, in preference to one which forces us to have recourse to an unusual translation. If Paul is reprimanding feminine insubordination, as is traditionally supposed, the natural interpretation is, of course, excluded, and commentators are forced to search about for some other mode of translation—with very doubtful success. But, if Paul is opposing the introduction of a rule compelling women to be bare-headed, the natural translation is perfectly apposite. The women, if left to themselves, would follow the prevailing fashion, and wear head-dresses, and Paul is asserting that they have a perfect right to do so, and must not be interfered with.

Is it likely, however, that anyone would seriously argue in favour of a rule compelling women to be bare-headed? To judge of this question of probability, we must remember that there must have been a prior question as to whether men should pray bare-headed. In the Synagogue, men prayed with covered heads. The Corinthian congregation (although

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\* A preposition is used instead of a simple genitive because the head is not the direct subject matter on which the discretionary power is exercised but merely describes the sphere of its operation.



the Christian mode of worship was largely modelled on that of the Synagogue) have already departed from the practice of the Synagogue in this respect. It is inherently probable that this departure had been a subject of discussion, in which Paul would have spoken about the inappropriateness of covering the head in Christian worship—perhaps expressing himself in strong and general terms (how Paul might speak about veils and coverings may be inferred from *II Corinthians iii, 14—18*): thus an impression could easily have been produced that Paul had laid down, as a matter of principle that the use of head-coverings was incompatible with the spirit of Christian worship. Further, Paul taught that, so far as strictly spiritual matters were concerned, there was no distinction between male and female in Christ (*Galatians iii, 28*). Thus, in Paul's absence, zealous members of the congregation might recall sayings, uttered originally in different contexts, and, putting two and two together, proceed to argue that, since coverings were incompatible with the spirit of Christian worship, and since in worship and spiritual matters there was no distinction of sexes, true Paulinism required the women to follow the same custom as the men. Indeed, Paul seems, in verse 16, to be traversing an assertion of his correspondents that their alleged custom is Pauline.

This hypothesis (or some modification of it) gains support from verse 2, where Paul acknowledges the loyal intentions of his correspondents. He uses a verb ("I praise you") which frequently implies polite refusal of an offer: "Thank you for the way in which you treasure up my sayings, and your literal adherence to them, but I cannot accept responsibility for your application of them." The section is addressed not to insubordinate persons but to over-literal Paulinists.

The next verse (3) is the one which has done most to put commentators off the right track. Its position makes it tempting to take it as a deliberate formulation of Paul's thesis controlling the whole of the subsequent argument. So taken, it seems to assert that discussion of heads should always be conducted with reference not only to the primary physical meaning of the word but also to its symbolical meaning as implying superiority over a subordinate, and that the right treatment of the head must be deduced from a scheme in which woman is subordinate to man, and man to Christ, and Christ to God. But a strict and rigorous exegesis on these lines proves impossible. The symbolical meaning or "head" is dropped either immediately, or very shortly. If the subordination of woman to man is analogous to the subordination of man to Christ, the result should surely be a similar treatment of the head in both cases—either the woman covering her head to express her subordination to the man and the man covering his to express subordination to Christ, or the man uncovering to assert the dignity of Christ and the woman doing the same to assert the dignity of the man: no reason is afforded on these lines why one should

be covered, the other uncovered. There does not seem to be any real evidence that covering the head was ever regarded, either among Jews or Gentiles, as a token of subordination to anyone. Further though the words "the man is the head of the woman" are true of the normal relationship of husband and wife in the ancient world, Paul can hardly have meant them to be applied with full rigour to the spiritual status of a Christian woman married to an unbeliever; nor are they very easily applicable to elderly widows, virgins or to female slaves or freed women, separated from their families, and subject to an unbelieving owner or patronus. For these reasons a fully rigorous interpretation of this verse must be ruled out. It is preferable to take it as a general indication of the sort of considerations which Paul's correspondents have overlooked—an indication too rapid and too highly condensed for strict verbal accuracy. Indeed, the impracticability of expecting strict verbal accuracy in such matters may itself be one of the points which Paul is concerned to stress: "Do not apply my sayings too literally; remember that words may have different meanings in different contexts—the word "head" itself is sometimes used symbolically rather than literally; and remember also that relationship with Christ does not altogether obliterate subordinate human relationships (such as that of the sexes), nor does the work of Christ destroy the work of God or annul the distinctions established at the creation." The wording may be partly influenced by some allusion to the arguments (whatever they were) which had been adduced by Paul's correspondents.

Paul now proceeds to his substantive arguments, which will be found to turn not upon subordination but upon the assertion and maintenance of personal dignity. "Persons performing solemn acts of religion should maintain their dignity; this is done by different methods in the case of the two sexes; that is a fact of common experience, and there is also a scriptural reason for it."

Verse 4 states the position as regards the man: if he prays or prophesies with something on his head, he insults his head. The statement is general, and does not imply that any male member of the congregation had actually covered his head when praying or prophesying. Nor is there any implication of a tendency towards immorality or licentiousness: it is simply a case of a scandalously undignified posture when performing a solemn act—like a lay-preacher going into the pulpit without a collar and tie, or a juryman taking the oath with his hands in his pockets. This was in accordance with normal usage in the Greek world. The man who treats his head informally thereby destroys his own dignity primarily—and, perhaps, secondarily the dignity of Christ, his spiritual "head" in the same way that an ambassador, in derogating from his own dignity, derogates from that of the state which he represents.

The first half of verse 5 is precisely parallel with verse 4: there is therefore no reason to imply any allusion to an actual occurrence or any

suggestion of immoral or licentious tendencies. According to normal Greek usage, a woman who appears with uncovered head on a formal occasion is failing to maintain her dignity and, incidentally, that of her husband, if she has one.

In the second half of verse 5 Paul illustrates the principle applicable to the dignity of the female head by allusion to the extreme indignity which the laws imposed upon certain immoral women, who, as a humiliating penalty, were compelled to shave their heads; this shows that it is generally recognised that to deprive a woman's head of its normal covering impairs her dignity. Paul does not make a direct comparison between the two women, but uses a neuter and impersonal construction: "It is one and the same thing as the shaven woman"; that is, the humiliation suffered by a Christian woman who removed her headdress in compliance with a church-custom would be identical in principle with that suffered by an immoral woman who shaved her head in compliance with the laws against adulteresses. In the same way, if an ecclesiastical disciplinarian were suggesting that a congregation should leave the church at the end of service in complete silence, filing out row by row, without greeting one another, an opponent might protest: "People who leave church in that sort of way humiliate themselves: it is exactly the same as convicts." Paul is sarcastic at the expense of unimaginative busy-bodies: there is no need to assume that he is flinging gross insults at Christian women.

The reference to shaving is strictly apposite, for (*verse 6*) the argument cannot be confined to the headdress but must logically be extended to the hair: the contention is that women's heads should come under the same rule as men's; well, a dignified masculine appearance requires not only a bare head but also short hair (*c.f., verse 14 infra*), accordingly "Even if a woman does not wear a headdress, she still needs a hair-cut!" (There is no need to assume that Paul was incapable of a certain amount of humour). If people can recognise the impropriety of clipping and shaving women's heads, they admit that feminine dignity is different from masculine dignity and requires that the head should not be denuded of covering, and the case for a headdress is therefore conceded. The force of the imperatives is logical rather than moral or disciplinary. The traditional interpretation seems to assume that Paul was somehow shocked into writing mere abusive nonsense.

In verses 7 and 9 Paul proceeds to state a scriptural reason for the different treatment of men's and women's heads. In reading this argument we should remember Paul's "philosophy of clothes," expressed at *I Corinthians xii, 22 and 23*: the need for artificial covering and embellishments is in inverse proportion to the natural dignity with which each member is endowed. The gist of the argument is that the male head has been created with so much original dignity that it would be a shame to



cover it, whereas the female head has been created with less original dignity and therefore requires to be embellished with a headdress. Paul accordingly shows that the male body is a primary work of God, created with the direct purpose of reflecting the divine image: the female body, on the other hand, is a secondary work, derived from the male body, and intended to provide it with a suitable counterpart, so that it is only an indirect reflection of the divine image. Thus the male body possesses so much native dignity that its superior member (the head) displays its fullest dignity when it has no covering at all. But the female body does not possess this highest measure of dignity, and therefore (*v. 10*) the woman must have power to do what she judges necessary to compensate for the defective natural dignity of her head. It might be argued that this necessity is dispensed with when the only spectators are members of a congregation which has adopted a rule in favour of feminine bare-headedness: but members of the congregation are not the only spectators with whom the woman is concerned: she may rightly resent being made "a spectacle to angels" (*c.f. I Corinthians iv, 9*). It should be noted that traditional interpretations of this verse not only do violence to New Testament idiom but also usually involve the idea that a piece of woven material is necessary as a safeguard against angelic influences; Paul, who insisted on exclusive reliance upon the sole and sufficient protection of Christ, would have regarded any such suggestion as anathema.

In verses 11 and 12 Paul safeguards himself against the suggestion that, in calling attention to natural physical differences established at the creation, he is going back upon his teaching that male and female are spiritually one in Christ.

At verse 13 Paul leaves the question to the judgment of the congregation. It was not his practice to lay down authoritative rules on external and ceremonial matters, and he does not do so here. He simply asks the congregation to decide the matter with a view to the actual merits of the case.

Paul cannot, however, refrain from re-stating his argument in a less technically theological form (*v.v. 14 and 15*). Women naturally have longer hair than men, and the common judgment recognises that this is appropriate to their respective dignity, men looking best when distinctly short-haired and women's heads needing covering. The words "if a woman has long hair it is a glory for her" show decisively that Paul is concerned not with feminine subordination and humility but with the need for women to look their best and present a dignified appearance.

Having urged the congregation to form a judgment on the merits of the case, Paul envisages the possibility (*verse 16*) that someone may still insist on pursuing an argumentative wrangle, with verbal and legalistic appeals to supposed authority. This is the sort of attitude (relying on

the words of human teachers) that Paul always opposes as "contentious," and a cause of strife, even when the people in question claim to be his own partisans (c.f. *I Corinthians i, 11 and 12*). In the face of this possible attitude, and as a last resort, Paul makes a definite statement about his own practice. Hitherto he has not done so, presumably because he did not regard such statements as having any positive relevance; for it was the duty and privilege of Christians to judge such issues for themselves, and not slavishly follow the practice of other men. Now he does make such a statement, for the negative purpose of precluding any attempt to impose the custom of feminine bare-headedness by asserting that it is Pauline and therefore authoritative: the custom is not his, nor that of any church. The form in which the statement is made (particularly the order of words) is not calculated to imply that Paul is positively insisting upon a custom to the contrary. He has left the matter to the free judgment of the congregation; and he presumably meant what he said.

It is noteworthy that scholars who commit themselves to the view that Paul is reprimanding insubordination are very apt to stumble over verse 16. Moffatt, Goodspeed, and the American "Revised Standard" Version, all, in effect, substitute "other" for "such"\* and many commentators do the same in paraphrasing the verse. This is an almost incredible piece of mis-translation: on such principles, "condemnation" might always be substituted for "acquittal" or "slavery" for "freedom." The only explanation for this strange procedure is that it is necessary in order to bring this verse into line with the preconceived notion that Paul is maintaining a rule against people who have broken it. A hypothesis which drives reputable scholars to adopt such methods of translation should be regarded with the gravest suspicion.

The view here put forward is confirmed by the way in which it explains the transition of thought from section to section. Paul has ended the preceding section with an exhortation to imitate himself (*xi. 1*). From this he turns naturally to note an instance in which, while intending to follow his precept and example, his correspondents have unfortunately failed to understand him. He then turns by contrast (*xi. 17 ff.*) to an instance in which no such good intentions can be credited to them. On the other hand, if, in accordance with traditional interpretation, we regard verses 2 and 16 as directed against disorderly insubordination, there is little or no reason for the contrast between "I praise" (*v. 2*) and "I do not praise" (*v. 17*).

Finally, it is worth considering the section in relation to Paul's general attitude. The traditional interpretation leaves us with the impression that Paul is so indignant at a deviation from his own practice and so shocked by the idea of an undraped female head, that, forgetting the importance of Christian liberty, the abolition of ceremonial rules, the

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\* e.g. Moffatt: "I acknowledge no other mode of worship."

spiritual status of women, and the obligations of Christian charity, he becomes scurrilously abusive of women who (whatever apprehensions might be entertained as to the ultimate tendencies of their behaviour) have not as yet been guilty of anything worse than an ill-considered breach of external church-discipline. On the other hand, the hypothesis here put forward shows Paul acting as he normally acted, defending the proper liberty of his converts and opposing (with a touch of understandable impatience) the officiousness of those who would interfere with it. We thus avoid the aspersions which, on the strength of this passage, have been unjustly cast upon the consistency of Paul's principles and the stability of his character.

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## Christian Origins

H. J. McLACHLAN, M.A., B.D.

A Review of *THE RISE OF CHRISTIANITY*, by E. W. BARNES  
(Longmans Green. 15/-. Pp. 356)

IN 1895, Alexander Robinson, an Argyleshire minister, published a *Study of the Saviour in the Newer Light*. The next year, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland condemned the book and ordered it to be withdrawn. Following this its author was excluded from the recognised ministry of that Church. The chief cause of offence was the free criticism of the New Testament documents which the book contained. Despite its reverent intention, the book's emphasis upon the full humanity of Jesus was also anathema to the majority of Churchmen.

Over fifty years have passed, and now a work by an eminent Anglican on a still wider theme has met with similar hostility. Rational in method and fully accepting the conclusions of modern science, opposed to ecclesiastical pretensions and holding a non-sacramental view of Christianity, Dr. Barnes represents the outlook of a "Christian humanist of the modern world." We may not agree with all that he says. Indeed, some of his conclusions appear to be somewhat far fetched. Yet those who believe in the importance of free inquiry in religion will contend for the bishop's right and duty to state his own convictions in his own way and to be given a fair hearing. They will deplore the refusal to review the book in a contemporary journal (*Theology*) and the attempt to ban it made by at least one public library committee.

The author states his intention to give an account of the origins of the Christian faith "so far as possible, without bias" (p. viii). He is conscious, one feels, all the time of the strain that this aim must impose on any writer of history. This probably explains the curiously detached and caustic tone of the book, as though the author were sometimes em-



ploying a scalpel rather than a pen. Nevertheless, amidst so much contemporary theological writing of the question-begging and blandly assertive kind, this bold attempt to re-assess the materials at our disposal and draw out the truth is to be warmly welcomed.

Covering a huge canvas, Dr. Barnes summarises in masterly fashion the main conclusions of archæology, ancient history, and the comparative study of religions so far as they affect the rise of Christianity. But like all summary statements, a discussion that proceeds from Palæolithic Man to Origen by way of Egypt and Mesopotamia, Eastern and Western Mediterranean, mystery religions, miracles, the birth, life and teaching of Jesus, the career of Paul, the early Christian writings both inside and outside the New Testament, the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the early Apologists, inevitably leaves something to be desired. Statements are made and conclusions reached sometimes upon too slight a foundation or with too scanty or even no attention to possible alternative views.

For example, following one school of critics perhaps rather too slavishly, Dr. Barnes prefers a later dating of most of the N.T. writings than many scholars would allow. To *Mark* he assigns a date about 85 A.D. without further reason than because miracle-stories occur in it and therefore "at least a generation and a half must have separated it from the crucifixion" (p. 109). To *Luke*, on the slender evidence of the much-debated literary dependence upon Josephus, he gives the date 100 A.D. Though this view has considerable support, the mere statement that "we may regard it as settled that *Luke* was written after the publication in 94 A.D. of the *Jewish Antiquities*" (p. 99) is too cavalier. The text of Josephus does not in fact contain the two mistakes of which Luke is guilty, and to assume that a "too hasty" reading of Josephus led the writer of Gospel and Acts into error has always seemed to the present writer to beg the question.

But it is when our author comes to the Pauline Letters that his procedure is most open to criticism. One may agree without demur that *Ephesians* is a mosaic of Pauline fragments and that the *Pastorals* are second century productions (though P. N. Harrison has argued a strong case for their containing genuine Pauline sections—of which Dr. Barnes says not a word). To state, however, that "we have no right to assume that even the best attested epistle is in its entirety, Paul's work" and then to carve up *I* and *II Corinthians* and *Romans* as the bishop does, is to out-Herod the Herod of the "analytical scholars" to whom he constantly appeals (without naming them). Thus, for instance, *I Corinthians 11, 17-34* is an interpolation of late date, reflecting the developed view of the early Church on the Eucharist and inserted in the interests of a sacramentalism foreign to the original genius of Christianity. *I Cor. 15* is a tract on the resurrection to be attributed to "some early

second-century Christian apologist" (p. 228) whilst the famous Hymn on Love can hardly have been the work of Paul because of its literary excellence. In *Romans*, Dr. Barnes finds teaching on Law and Sin which he cannot think "came from a Jew carefully brought up in the traditions of his people" (p.234) Pseudo-Pauline are also the theory of baptism found in *Romans* 6 and the doctrine of the two Adams of 5: 12-21. Here (as elsewhere, according to our author) may be discerned the pervasive influence of the oriental mystery religions whose initiation rites and worship have left their mark upon the Christian sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.

That the bishop dislikes the paradoxical is manifest, but unfortunately human character and actions are not seldom involved in paradox, and nowhere is this truer than of Paul. Dr. Barnes cannot, frankly, be said to have penetrated far into the admittedly difficult region of the Pauline theology or (more important) into the Pauline temperament and mysticism. Too great a sympathy with the writers of the N.T. literature would perhaps have laid him open to the charge of undue bias which he is anxious to avoid. Yet one cannot help feeling that a larger measure of psychological insight and imaginative sympathy are needed by the historian of Christianity than he appears to possess. Whilst his fearless and frank treatment of his theme commands our respect, it does not raise our enthusiasm. We are continually held to the precipice-path of N.T. criticism, as if for the sheer joy of looking down, when very often other ways of ascent are open to us. Though in agreement with so much that Dr. Barnes says in this book, with his stress, for example, on the essentially socialist, pacifist, and internationalist character of early Christianity; though applauding his impatience with all forms of obscurantism and 'post-critical' hankering after the flesh-pots of pre-critical credulity, yet one cannot help thinking that the Christian humanism which he is at pains to show is "a lovely and satisfying faith" would have been better served if this volume had contained some re-integration of the elements which he rescues from a searching analysis of the New Testament. Will he now turn from analysis to synthesis and build upon the ethical and spiritual values which he discovers in Christianity but which are not here emphasised as they might be?

As he himself avers, "Far more important than a common theology (is) a common way of life." The Christian ethic and not the Christian myth is the basic, unchanging treasure of our Faith. Yet men commonly need some historical leverage and mystical impulse to give to the ethic a commanding force that is greater than that of commonplace or truism. One wonders whether Dr. Barnes's Christian humanism, despite its patent sincerity and its freedom from dogmatic bias, can supply that need.

# *The Myth and the Mass Mind*

J. CYRIL FLOWER, M.A., PH.D.

A review of *MASS MAN AND RELIGION* by E. G. Lee  
*Hutchinson and Co. 16/- Pp. 160.*

**M**R. LEE'S contention in this book is that mankind is increasingly becoming a collection of crowds, and is being undermined by the spread of crowd psychology. Faith in God (usually referred to in the book as "the Absolute") has been destroyed in the majority of the "mass men" thus produced. They are, nevertheless, terribly lonely in their overcrowded world of rapid transport, radio networks, and machine-made entertainment, and are vainly seeking a substitute religion in State worship. Nothing, however, can save mass man from his unhappiness and maladjustment except the rediscovery of God and a new experience of the eternal Order which contains and interpenetrates the world of time.

Experience of God is not the result of a process of reasoning, however important reasoning about experience may be. To attain experience of God it is necessary to reach out by feeling into what seems to reason to be the surrounding mystery. Feeling, to succeed where reason is baffled, must be winged by imagination. It then elaborates the Myth, which is a vehicle of exploration in spiritual regions otherwise inaccessible. Its function is not to enclose the truth, as most believers in myth assume, but to disclose it—or as much of it as can be apprehended by the human soul at any epoch of its development. The major misfortune in history is that myths tend to become fixed and permanent structures and their believers settled residents within the structure, claiming rights of exclusive possession and privilege, instead of remaining vehicles for spiritual exploration, to be reconstructed or superseded when they cease to convey their users along the way which is truth and life. Humanly speaking, truth is a Path, not a destination; a Way, not a terminus.

The crisis of our time as it directly challenges us in the West, arises from the breakdown of the Christian Myth. It is no longer, for mass man, a successful vehicle of exploration and discovery, because it has hardened into a dogmatic system claiming finality. It is not so much the incredibility of what authoritarian Christianity teaches, as the fact that it does not any longer convey the seeker along the pathway of discovery and experience, which constitutes the contemporary breakdown. What is needed is the courageous and wholehearted recognition of the

instrumental function of all myth, and of the Christian myth in particular, so that the futile struggle to get men to believe in the myth as the revealed replica of truth may give place to the endeavour to arouse faith through myth in that after which it is feeling. "Mass man finds himself not so much in need of a 'new faith'. . . . as in need of knowing how to exercise faith." (p. 130). Faith is a personal and spiritual activity, not intellectual assent to a proposition; religiously, its object is God, not the credal system of any particular religion. Somehow, then, "the Christian myth must be adjusted to include those who cannot accept it." (p. 159). The significant, quickening myth which can resolve our dilemma and surmount our crisis by restoring man to his proper relation to God and his neighbour must be a Christian construction, so far as Europe and America are concerned, "because it is the one organized religion of the West that is consciously Theistic." (p. 158).

There is one difficulty which does not receive any definite solution in Mr. Lee's treatment of the myth. Hitherto the success of the myth in bringing man into communion with God has depended, humanly speaking, upon his belief in the truth of the myth. Once man discovered that what he had accepted as absolute truth was in fact a mythological exploration or adumbration, he cast it away into the limbo of dreams and phantasies. Is it psychologically possible for man—especially "mass man" to believe in that which the myth seeks to disclose when, at the same time, he is taught that this myth is true only in some Pickwickian sense? Moreover, is any consciously undertaken modification of a once helpful, but now discarded, myth capable of eliciting any response of faith? The really potent myth has very deep roots in the psyche, and is not easily transplanted. The task to which Mr. Lee calls us is, no doubt, to graft a civilised myth on to a wild one, but will the awareness that both the stem and the grafted twig are myths be consistent with acceptance of the fruits of the grafting?

Mr. Lee presents his diagnosis and issues his challenge with deep feeling and genuinely prophetic fervour. He writes as one who not only has wrestled with destiny, but is actually wrestling in the effort to give expression to what he feels. This disarms purely literary criticism, but it carries with it the drawback of occasional obscurity, and the use of metaphors which are at times confusing rather than suggestive. But the effect of reading the book is not merely thought provoking—it is heart searching. The author's own personality and faith, depth of feeling and wealth of insight reveal themselves throughout the book. It will probably not be popular, but its message should reach a large public, for those who do read it will be stirred to a new urgency of proclamation and of endeavour to help our generation to find again the way we have lost.



# *Is Karl Barth a Modernist?*

SIDNEY SPENCER, B.A.

A Review of *THE NEW MODERNISM*, by Cornelius van Til

*James Clarke, 20s. pp. 379*

In the Protestant theology of the last twenty or thirty years incomparably the greatest influence has been that of Karl Barth and Emil Brunner. The influence which these two thinkers have exerted has been from the Liberal or Modernist point of view quite definitely reactionary. An English Church leader has declared that they have saved the Protestant Churches of the Continent from Unitarianism. They have brought a new emphasis in religious thinking. That emphasis has served undoubtedly to correct certain weaknesses in the Liberal or Modernist position. It has led in particular to a rehabilitation of the belief in divine transcendence and to a growing recognition of the superficiality of that easy-going optimism concerning the trends of modern civilisation and modern "progress" which has been characteristic of much Liberal religion. It has faced us with a fundamental challenge concerning the fact of sin and the fact of revelation and redemption. It has compelled us, so far as we are sensitive to the living thought of our time, to re-think our own position. At the same time, the new movement has brought with it, owing to the extreme views which its leaders have been led to adopt, a narrowing and hardening of the outlook of orthodox religion. It has stemmed the liberalising influence which was previously so widely at work in modern theology.

In view of the actual effect which Barthian teaching has produced on Protestant religion and of the critical attitude of its exponents towards Modernism (Barth speaks of the Modernist section of the Church as "a false synagogue"), it seems strange that an American theologian of considerable learning and philosophical acumen should now condemn the movement as a "New Modernism." Yet that is the criticism advanced in his recent book by Cornelius van Til, Professor of Apologetics at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia. Barth has been described, with much apparent justification, as "a modern Calvin." Van Til, on the other hand, regards him as a heretic. "This enemy (he says) comes in the guise of a friend; he is all the more dangerous for that. The Theology of Crisis acts as a fifth-column in orthodox circles." It is the purpose of the writer, in his extensive and detailed work, to expose the real tendencies of the teaching of Barth and Brunner, and so to rally the forces of orthodoxy against them.

Professor van Til writes as a convinced and thorough-going Calvinist. Yet he is not content to expose the heresies of Barth and Brunner in departing from the fundamental Calvinist tenets of the plenary inspiration of Scripture and the election of all men to salvation or perdition. The

indictment is far more comprehensive. He accuses Barth and Brunner of denying the fundamentals, not only of Calvinist theology, but of Christian and even theistic teaching. They "use Christian terminology," he maintains, "for the expression of non-Christian concepts." Neither in the one nor in the other is there any genuine Christianity or theism. The claim is in the highest degree paradoxical. Here are two leaders of thought whose work has deflected the current of Protestant theology in Europe and America—whose influence has been welcomed on the one hand and deplored on the other for its anti-Liberal tendency—yet we are now called to regard them as ultra-Liberal! Is it possible, as van Til suggests, that from the standpoint of Christian orthodoxy they are really wolves in sheep's clothing? Is it possible that the influence which they have exerted, and are continuing to exert, is really based upon a complete misunderstanding? The contention seems on the face of it incredible. Yet van Til presents his case with a considerable array of learning. The publishers claim that his book is "the best-informed and the most thorough and penetrating critique to which the 'Theology of Crisis' has yet been subjected—at least in the English language." It may therefore be worth while to submit his view to a careful examination. For the sake of convenience the present article will confine itself to the work of Barth.

Professor van Til's thesis is broadly this: while Barth and Brunner have reacted against the tendency, so marked in Liberal theology, to emphasise human consciousness, feeling, experience, as the central fact in religion—while they have claimed to return to the Biblical doctrine of revelation as a divine and objective reality—they have not, in fact, succeeded in emancipating themselves from the influence of the "Critical" philosophy of Kant, for which the mind of man, and not the mind of God, is the central fact. Barth's "wholly other" God, he declares, is not an objective reality at all, but only "the idea of abstract contingency and abstract rationality." Barth, in effect, "ignores and denies all distinctions of being and of consciousness between God and man": God, Christ, the Spirit are "but enlarged shadows cast by man himself." Revelation is simply a human fact resting on "man and his own determination to remain true to his ideal"; "all men everywhere have God's revelation, because each man may find it within himself." There is no historic fall and no historic redemption: "The Christ of a critical theology is the ideal self of man and nothing more." "the resurrection of Jesus Christ stands for the idea of the general progress of the human race towards ideal perfection. Miracle is eliminated; and naturally there can be no place for the Second Coming in any literal sense—"the last things of Barth are equally near to all men everywhere."

No doubt van Til has closely studied the work of Barth and Brunner; his book abounds in quotations. But his account of their teaching can-

only be described as an amazing distortion. If there is one fact which shines out through their writings, it is their intense conviction of the reality of God. Barth says explicitly that God "is one who knows and wills, who acts and speaks, who as an 'I' calls me 'thou,' and whom I can call 'thou' in return." He says that "revelation is an event of the free and sovereign activity of God towards man"—an event which brings to light "the world-wide difference separating God and man." In his book, "God in Action," he describes the meeting of God and man which takes place in revelation as a miracle—an event "brought about by the initiative of a sovereign God." As an aid to understanding, he draws a remarkable analogy. He compares the act of God in revelation to a military offensive, in which God is the enemy, while the troops which are attacked represent the prophets and apostles, to whom revelation comes. So far is Barth from denying the historical basis of the Christian creed that he affirms, "To say revelation is to say, 'The Word became flesh.' " Revelation as he conceives it has the quality of *Einmaligkeit* or singularity—it happens once for all. In Jesus the Creator became creature." This was the supreme miracle; and it is natural that it should be attested by particular wonders. The Virgin Birth and the Empty Tomb are the most significant of all miracles, because they are "tokens of revelation"—they "betoken the existence of Jesus Christ as the human existence which is identical with God Himself." It is only through the historical revelation in Jesus Christ that we have any real knowledge of God: for that reason no other religion can be compared for a moment with Christianity. As, moreover, the Incarnation is a fact of history, so will be the Second Coming. Christ "has come and will likewise come again in direct worldly presence." Barth is, indeed, so far from cherishing the hope which van Til ascribes to him of a progress to be achieved by man himself through his own will and effort that he regards man as utterly lost and fallen and incapable of redemption save through the miraculous power of God. The only hope for the world lies in the divine power, whereby all things shall at last be made new.

Van Til's view of Barth is a distortion. The basis of it appears to be a twofold failure of understanding. In the first place, Barth's position has undergone a profound modification. Between the Commentary on Romans and the miscellaneous writings published as "*The Word of God and the Word of Man*" on the one hand, and his later works like "*The Doctrine of the Word of God*" and the *Gifford Lectures* on the other, there is a far-reaching difference of outlook. He has become far more traditional in his approach to theology, far more deeply influenced by Luther and Calvin, far less affected by philosophy. Van Til admits a certain difference in the presentation of Barth's teaching, but fails to recognise the fundamental change which has come about in the substance of his thought. He does no real justice, moreover, to the earlier phase



of the Barthian theology. He is himself so completely hostile to the whole trend of modern philosophy that he is capable of declaring that "all of post-Kantian philosophy is phenomenalistic and positivistic." That being so, it is not, perhaps, altogether surprising that he should regard Barth's conception of God as a pure abstraction. Yet, in fact, in his earlier as in his later work Barth takes his stand upon the contrary assumption. He takes his stand upon the belief in the overshadowing presence of divine and eternal Reality. It is the sense of that Reality confronting us at every moment which lies at the heart of his teaching. It is that which provides the original basis of his interpretation of eschatology—the Kingdom of God is eternally near. It is that which in the first instance underlay his emphasis on sin—"when human existence is confronted by the Eternity of God, it becomes sin." It is that which is the key to his original understanding of the significance of Christ and the Resurrection and the nature of the true, inner being of man. Man is rooted in the Eternal; his existence in this world is a mark of his fall from the primal unity of being. It is the significance of Jesus that in him the primal unity of God and man is made manifest: he is "the document by which the original, lost-but-recoverable union of God and man is guarded." The Resurrection, in particular, symbolises the manifestation of the other, eternal world. "What is narrated in enigmatical manner in the gospels about the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is at bottom really nothing else than the appearance and the cognition of this Kingdom of God, of a life that is God's own."

This brief exposition suffices to make two things clear. In the first place, Barth's teaching in its earlier stages was very far removed from the traditional orthodoxy to which his later thought is in substance a reversion. Secondly, although the earlier Barth may well be termed a Modernist, his Modernism cannot justly be accused of the subjectivism and the positivism with which van Til charges it. In his original, as in his developed, theology he stood for the reality of the Transcendent. The tragedy is that with the lapse of years he has lost the breadth of vision which marked his earlier outlook.

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## *Man's Place in Nature*

### AN EVOCATION

**MAN**, brought forth by nature, has become her strangest child. Indeed, she has sometimes cause to complain of his bad manners, for he is too prone to cast in her face that his father is God. Being himself aware of his strangeness, he finds it hard to give any sober account of himself, and all his self-explanations are torn out of truth between the God-sectaries and the nature-scientists.



Nature has given him something so subtle as to evade detection, yet so evident as to show uniqueness in a hundred ways.

Certainly he has not the eruptive energy of the seething incandescence of the sun, nor the sustaining power that swings the planets, nor the fluent gravity of the oceans, though by them all he lives in submission.

Neither has he the sure instinct of the ant, nor the trusted guide of the swallow, nor the speed of the deer, nor the sight of the vulture, nor even the thick skin of the hippopotamus. He has not the sinews of the ox, nor the fell mask of the wolf, nor the blood-freezing presence of the tiger. He cannot shout like the lion, sail like the albatross, swim like the dolphin, plunge like the gannet, soar as the lark, nor, as the nightingale, bewitch the dusk with beauty. He is unspecialised, defective, soft, fragile, naked and afraid. He is stripped of every gift that nature can provide except his manhood. He is emptied of every natural power but that of his humanity.

Yet, with all his nervous fears, he has dragged his tender flesh through the primeval jungles, entrenched himself against the pitiless ice invasions, buffeted his way over ocean wastes, fought and fed on monsters, survived the Alpine convulsions, and availed himself of every unguarded chink in the hostile crust of the earth. With an angelic impudence he has seized these same inhospitable rocks, dragged them forth, and hewn them to the shapes of the brooding thought in his sculptured cathedrals. For, as his first monuments were to his own terrors, his later are to the glory and goodness of the Creator, who has not only permitted man to be, but has Himself become man.

When the bare data of history are set beside his dreadful sensitivity, man becomes an enigma of pathos and nobility. Unconscious of his birth, he is always conscious of his death. He has had to learn that consciousness is more than death, and life more than duration. That life may always be young, he has had to learn a thousand ways of dying. He has perished in privations, exposures, diseases and convulsions of the earth. He has fallen in gallantry and accepted martyrdom for a gesture. He has been killed by care, and butchered by his brother. He has even cast away his life in a fit of proud anger, or surrendered it in the simplicity of utter sadness. And there is not one but has borne his or her part in the complicated passion of mankind, with all its unreckoned and unreckonable cost.

But he is still himself. If disappointed he is yet witty; if ironic he is unsoured; if discouraged, still inventive; if dying, for ever renewed. The white men, indeed, may be giving the future to the black or the yellow, but his colour is of no consequence, and his destiny never was in the pigment of his skin.

As, with his branched and forked figure, he steps forth from his story, his marks, with no little awe, are discerned.

His hands and eyes are not unlike the monkey's, their brains have a similarity, and it is even said that the ape has some fumbling way of using tools. But man is the only animal that makes musical instruments. He alone is the poet and singer, the only conscious artist and creator.

He is one of the—probably very few—animals that can see the light of the stars, certainly the only one that has any idea of what they are. He is the only scientist.

He is the only creature that can, of its own energy, sustain one thought in preference to another; the only one for whom ideas have a mental, as against a merely nervous, causation. Deliberative thought makes him the only one capable of freedom of the will.

He is the only creature who regards the passage of thought, and the appearance of ideas, as events equally interesting with any other. By his reflective habit, and in his philosophies, he is the only living thing through whom nature for the first time contemplates itself. He is the first to say of pattern that it is law, and of form that it is beauty. The book of nature has long awaited its reader.

He is the only creature conscious of problems, and who in any degree worries over them. Worrying over problems is one of his vices. He is, indeed, the only animal with vices—with conscious perversions such as dishonesty, hypocrisy.

And while he is not the only animal to have nervous breakdowns, he has brought a unique intensity to such moods in his feelings of shame, remorse, guilt, contrition. He is a moralist, and is the only animal that has hit upon the idea of condemning its own way of life and its very nature.

While he is not the only creature with a history, and is neither the oldest nor youngest of living species, he is the only one that has possessed its history by taking knowledge of it, and has drawn upon himself its ambiguous and forbidding lessons.

His sense of history has compelled him to bring his conscious intelligence, with unending involutions of argument, to the organisation of his societies. Alone of all creatures he accepts responsibility for his social habits.

Both his sense of history and the duty of intelligent organisation have brought about the fabrication of traditions. These built-up memories of social achievement constitute the obligations he imposes on his neighbours, and even accepts for himself.

His traditions would perhaps settle into a blindly repetitive, instinctual pattern were it not for recurrent disturbers of social habit. These are not the criminals, who more often serve to confirm the tradition than break it, but the prophets who would push to new traditions by extolling the far excellencies and despising the present average. This daring spirit of prophecy is also a gift to nature uniquely brought by mankind. And it provides a further strain on man by giving him a mid-way, two-directional sensation. He is torn by the attraction of two poles; the one lying behind him in the obscurities of history and the obscenities of evolution, the other before him, on his line of life, projected into the unknown, which he calls the future, and in which he sees things different and changing, things of power and of judgment. In this tension he cries alternately and confusedly that he is surely heaven-destined, and again, that he is indelibly stained and hereditarily doomed.

But it is not all confusion. From his intellect there continue to come the forms of truth; the principles of justice are indestructible in his will, while sometimes his imagination, from the heights of serenity, proclaims mercy on all that live.

This annunciation is, of all his utterances, of all his achievements and hopes and prayers, the most defiant of his natural context with its lusting and carnivorous nîsus. It is the furthest stretch of his will away from his libidinous mother—though it may be the rarest triumph in all her creatures and her secret pride amidst all her children. This hope of mercy in himself vexes and provokes him, leaving him haunted by the dream of a Kingdom of God, in which the moral imagination shall cease for ever from uneasiness.

This way have men before us passed. Let us remove our shoes from off our feet, for the path on which we stand is holy ground.